

REGULAR MEETING OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Monday, November 24, 2014.

Mayor Jordan called the meeting to order at 8:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL was answered by Councilmembers Judith F. Davis, Konrad E. Herling, Leta M. Mach, Silke I. Pope, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan.

ALSO PRESENT were Michael McLaughlin, City Manager; David Moran, Assistant City Manager; John Shay, City Solicitor; and Cindy Murray, City Clerk.

Mayor Jordan asked for a moment of silence in memory of residents Pauline Ellers, Lillian O'Brien, Douglas Sturm and Jack Owens and former resident Helen J. Ritter Hindt. He then led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA: It was moved by Mr. Putens and seconded by Ms. Mach that the consent agenda be approved. The motion passed 7-0.

Council thereby took the following actions:

Minutes

Work Session, September 30, 2013
Work Session, October 29, 2014
Notes Four Cities Meeting, October 30, 2014
Regular Meeting, November 10, 2014

Approved as presented.

Letter to County – Transportation Priorities: Council approved sending a letter to County Council Chair Franklin noting its support of the County's Transportation Priorities as long as the "MD 193 University Boulevard" project remains no lower than second on the Project Planning Start list.

Removal from Advisory Board: Council removed Abdul Turay as a member of the Park and Recreation Advisory Board.

Employee Special Holiday: Council approved Friday, December 26, 2014, as a special holiday to employees.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mayor Jordan requested "Small Business Saturday Proclamation" be added to the agenda under Presentations and Mr. Roberts requested "Referral for Ethics Review" be added to the agenda as Item #23. With these two additions, it was moved by Mr. Putens and seconded by Ms. Pope that the agenda be approved. The motion passed 7-0.

PRESENTATIONS:

Small Business Saturday Proclamation: Mayor Jordan read a proclamation declaring Saturday, November 29, 2014, as Small Business Saturday and encouraged residents to

support local businesses by buying locally on this day and throughout the year. He recognized Gwen Vaccaro, Greenbelt Community Development Corporation, and Cindy Comproni, Roosevelt Center Merchants Association/Greenbelt Federal Credit Union, who were in attendance and presented each with a copy of the proclamation.

Ms. Vaccaro thanked Council for recognizing the important role small businesses play in the community.

Ms. Davis, Mr. Herling and Ms. Mach commented on the Marketplace Fairness Act, proposed legislation pending in the Congress that will allow states to require online and other out-of-state retailers to collect sales and use tax. Ms. Mach commented that this isn't a new tax but a tax that hasn't been implemented properly for many years.

Recycle Right Awards: Mayor Jordan announced that November 15 was America Recycles Day. Luisa Robles, the City's Sustainability Coordinator, explained the Recycle Right Awards program and identified the winners. Each winner received new blue recycling bins identifying them as contest winners, as well as prizes awarded by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Mom's Organic Market, and College Park REI.

The winners were:

Matt and Chris Beckley	122 Northway	Monday City Route
Nathan Caudill	58-H Ridge Road	Tuesday City Route
Jessie Britton	6-C Crescent Road	Wednesday City Route
Dorian Winterfeld and Amethyst Dwyer	36-J Ridge Road	Thursday City Route
Jeffrey and Beth Didion	7853 Emilys Way	Contractual Route

PETITIONS AND REQUESTS:

Brian Almquist, 112 Hedgewood Drive, read a petition to Deny City's Request to Rewrite the Forest Preserve. (A copy of the petition is attached to the minutes.)

Ms. Davis read a petition submitted by Pat McAndrew, 7500 Greenway Center Drive and 115 Periwinkle Court, requesting to amend his petition submitted at the October 27, 2014, meeting to include funding step increases for all classified employees. She noted that Mr. McAndrew was unable to attend the meeting due to scheduling issues. (A copy of the petition is attached to the minutes.)

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS: None

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Mr. McLaughlin announced the City's annual Festival of Lights will begin on December 5th with the lighting of the Holiday Tree. He added that the Greenbelt East Tree Lighting is scheduled for December 7th.

Ms. Davis asked the status of the assessment of the five rooms available at the old Greenbelt Middle

School. Mr. McLaughlin said Gardiner and Gardiner had submitted a cost proposal on Friday and it is being reviewed this week by staff. He said CARES and Planning & Code Enforcement staff are also evaluating the rooms to determine if they have any use for them. Mr. McLaughlin said once complete, the information will be provided to Council.

In response to a question from Mayor Jordan, Mr. McLaughlin provided an update on the renovation work at Greenbelt Theater. He said a construction progress meeting is scheduled for next week. Ms. Davis requested a project status report be provided bi-weekly.

Ms. Pope asked the status of the Safe Routes to School project on Springhill Drive. Mr. McLaughlin said the islands and crosswalks are complete but the electric work for the flashing signage has not yet been done. He said he would check on the timeline of the electric work.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

LEGISLATION

A Resolution to Authorize the Negotiated Purchase of Installation of Kalwall Roof System over the Indoor Pool Area at the Greenbelt Aquatic and Fitness Center from Structures Unlimited, Inc. at a Cost not to Exceed \$570,000

Mayor Jordan read the agenda comments.

Ms. Mach introduced the resolution for first reading.

Mr. Roberts asked if the new roof system would be retractable. Mr. McLaughlin said yes. Mr. Roberts asked how often the roof was actually opened. Mr. McLaughlin said the roof is opened to move air in the facility but he would check with staff to determine how often that is done.

Mr. Roberts noted his opposition to the use of Program Open Space (POS) funds for this type of project and said he would not support the resolution.

Petition for a Policy on Reporting Crime and Special Procedures for Child Pornography: Mayor Jordan read the agenda comments.

Mayor Jordan noted that Council reviewed the petition from John Abell for a policy on reporting crime and special procedures for child pornography at its work session on June 16, 2014. He explained that based on discussion at the work session, Council had directed staff to: 1) Review the Police Department Policy on the Release of Information; 2) Research a Training Program offered by the Darkness to Light Organization; and 3) Develop a City Policy on Handling a Situation where a City Employee is Accused/Found guilty of Child Sexual Abuse.

Captain Tom Kemp said the Police Department had reviewed its policy on the release of information regarding child pornography related offenses. He said a proposed modification has been proposed to their policy (general order) to include in the Police Blotter/Weekly Crime Report details of the arrest of any suspects involved in child pornography related offenses in cases where specified established criteria are met regarding no harm coming to specific victims or witnesses, or the investigation not being compromised.

Mr. McLaughlin explained that Dr. Park, Director of Greenbelt CARES, had researched available training programs and was impressed with the program offered by the Darkness to Light organization that “raises awareness of the prevalence and consequences of child sexual abuse by educating adults to prevent, recognize and react responsibly to the reality of child sexual abuse.” He said Dr. Park has recommended the City host/fund an initial training program provided by the Darkness to Light organization to CARES staff and up to 25 persons as an initial effort.

Ms. Mach asked if individuals would have to pay to attend the training. Mr. McLaughlin said it was recommended the City cover the cost of the initial training. If enough interest is expressed in a second training session, the cost can be reviewed at that time.

Ms. Pope suggested the initial training be provided to CARES staff, all department heads and supervisors and up to 25 persons. Mr. Herling said he supported Ms. Pope’s suggestion. Mr. Putens said all staff members should be included in the initial training, then a second training (and third if necessary) be offered for other individuals.

Mr. McLaughlin advised that current City policy allows for the dismissal or suspension of an employee convicted of “a felony or any offense involving moral turpitude” which provides sufficient authority and direction to act in a case where an employee is accused or convicted of child pornography or sexual abuse. He reviewed a modified City policy specific to cases where an employee is accused or convicted of child pornography or sexual abuse.

Ms. Mach asked if employees suspended from their positions are paid. Mr. McLaughlin said yes, in typical circumstances. Mr. Roberts expressed concern that the judicial process can take an extended period of time. Capt. Kemp agreed that investigations can often be a lengthy process.

Ms. Pope recommended the proposed modified policy specific to cases of child pornography or sexual abuse be adopted.

John Abell said he was very pleased with the proposal under consideration. He commented that training needs may need updating in the future. Mr. Abell also said he had spoken to a Maryland State Police (MSP) representative who advised that the MSP will provide training on crimes against children to Greenbelt police officers and the MSP said they would welcome participation of a Greenbelt police officer on their Crimes Against Children Task Force. He suggested the City arrange for this training.

Bill Orleans, Greenbelt, asked and was provided answers to several questions.

Ms. Davis moved that Council approve the following actions:

- 1) Proposed modification to Police Department policy (general order) to include details of the arrest of any suspects involved in child pornography related offenses in the Police Blotter/Weekly Crime Report in cases where specified established criteria are met regarding no harm coming to specific victims or witnesses, or the investigation not being compromised.
- 2) Host/fund initial training programs provided by the Darkness to Light organization to CARES staff, all department heads and supervisors and up to 25 persons as an initial effort and review other training options such MSP training.
- 3) Proposed City policy specific to cases where an employee is accused or convicted of child pornography or sexual abuse.

Ms. Pope seconded.

It was noted that the Police Department provides names of individuals arrested in their weekly police report but the *News Review* edits out the names prior to publication. Mr. Roberts asked if the City could pay the *News Review* to include the names.

Sue Stern, 5-K Gardenway, spoke in support of Council's actions on this item. She suggested that the Police Department receive training from the MSP Crimes Against Children Unit.

Laura Kressler, Chair of the Public Safety Advisory Committee, spoke in support of Council's action.

The motion passed 7-0.

Petition Regarding Safety of Cell Phones and Other Wireless Devices: Mayor Jordan read the agenda comments.

Mayor Jordan said that Theodora Scarato had petitioned Council at its October 27, 2014, meeting to issue a proclamation regarding the dangers of cell phones and other wireless devices. He noted that the City does not use proclamations to take official positions on issues or to make policy statements, but instead sends correspondence to appropriate agencies expressing concern about, or advocacy for, a particular issue.

Mr. Herling noted his employment with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and asked if his participation on this agenda item or the next agenda item could be a conflict of interest. After discussion, Mr. Shay said no as Mr. Herling's position had nothing to do specifically with these items.

Theodora Scarato, 6-S Hillside, thanked Council for considering her petition. She provided packets to Council noting the actions taken by other governments across the country. Ms. Scarato encouraged education to use cell phones more intelligently.

Mayor Jordan requested that cell phone safety information be included on the City website.

Ms. Davis said she would support Council sending a non-alarmist letter to the FCC expressing concern about possible dangers of cell phones and other wireless devices. However, she added more research is needed on the subject and noted that the National Cancer Society has not even taken a position on this concern yet.

Mr. Putens moved that Council send a letter to the FCC encouraging action on the possible dangers of cell phones and other wireless devices and the City make brochures available to encourage simple safety steps when using these devices for distribution at City events, such as the health fair, to help raise awareness about this issue. Ms. Pope seconded.

The motion passed 7-0.

Ms. Davis encouraged caution be used to assure the brochures are educational and not alarmist in nature.

Petition to Oppose Locating Cell Phone Towers on School Property: Mayor Jordan read the agenda comments.

Mayor Jordan said that Theodora Scarato had petitioned Council at its October 27, 2014, meeting to oppose the placement of cell phone towers on Prince George's County Public School (PGCPS) property. He explained that PGCPS entered into an agreement to lease property to Milestone Communications for the possible location of cell phone towers. According to news reports, over 70 schools have been identified as potential sites including Eleanor Roosevelt High School, Greenbelt Middle School and Turning Point Academy.

Ms. Scarato explained that communities and parents of children attending county schools don't know in advance when the cell towers will be installed.

Councilmembers expressed their opposition to the placement of cell towers on school property. Mayor Jordan and Ms. Davis suggested this concern be included on the agenda of the upcoming legislative dinner to discuss with School Board Member Lupi Grady.

Ms. Mach suggested Council send a letter to the PGCPS School Board and the County Executive noting its opposition to cell phone towers on school properties focusing on the concerns of parents and citizens, encouraging more transparency in the process and expressing safety concerns cell towers place to students, such as tower access roads, maintenance of the towers, personnel who service the towers, etc.

Ms. Davis said both she and Mayor Jordan had received letters from CTI Wireless asking them to oppose this item and the previous item on the dangers of cell phones and wireless devices.

Mr. Putens moved that Council send a letter to the County Executive, the PGCPS Board, the PGCPS Chief Executive Officer and the County Office of Acquisitions: 1) noting the City's opposition to cell phone towers on school property in the City and in schools where Greenbelt children attend schools; 2) focusing on the concerns of parents and the community; 3) encouraging more transparency in the process of cell phone tower placement on school

properties; and 4) expressing safety concerns to students such as tower access roads, maintenance of the towers and personnel who service the towers. He further moved that this concern be included on the agenda of Council's legislative dinner. Mr. Herling seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

Mr. Herling asked that staff research HR-4961, federal legislation that may affect emergency responders.

Greenbelt Theater – 35 Millimeter Projector: Mayor Jordan read the agenda comments.

Mayor Jordan said that the Theater renovation project includes funding for the installation of a new projector system as well as retaining the existing 35 millimeter (mm) projector but a second 35 mm has been proposed so that films do not need to be spliced and the current dual platter projection system can be eliminated. Mr. McLaughlin said that the second projector had been discussed but funding had not been included in the project. The entire cost for the installation of the second 35 mm projector is approximately \$30,000.

Caitlin McGrath, President of Friends of Greenbelt Theater (FOGT), explained that the porthole in the projection booth will be bricked over after the installation of the digital projector and it is time critical to have the largest piece of the 35 mm projector installed while the porthole is accessible. She said \$10,000 will allow the largest essential parts of the equipment to be placed into the room and the remainder of the equipment/work can be done at a later date.

There was discussion regarding the entire cost for the second 35 mm projector. Ms. McGrath said there may be ways to reduce some costs and this could be reviewed when more time is available. She said it is critical now to get the largest essential pieces of the equipment in at this time. Ms. McGrath said FOGT have raised \$4,500 for the Reel-to-Reel campaign which will be donated to the projector purchase.

Ms. Davis suggested Dr. McGrath and staff meet with Cardinal Sound System to review the entire costs for the installation of this projection equipment. However, she noted the deadline was approaching regarding placement of the largest pieces of the equipment. Ms. Davis mentioned the \$4,500 of the FOGT donations and the \$1,800 remaining in the original Friends of Greenbelt Theater account could be used towards the purchase but questioned where the additional funds would come from. Ms. Mach said she would be supportive of the use of these funds combined with the Roosevelt Center Revolving Loan Fund which together would cover the \$10,000 needed for this phase of the purchase.

Ms. Mach moved that Council approve Dr. McGrath's proposal for the first phase purchase of a 35 mm projection equipment at a cost of \$10,000 with the provision that Dr. McGrath and staff meet with Cardinal Sound System to review the 35 mm projection equipment costs. Ms. Davis seconded.

It was noted that a decision can be made on proceeding with the second phase of the projection equipment purchase until after a decision is made on a theater operator.

Ms. Pope said Council should wait until the meeting was held with Cardinal Sound System before it commits to this decision.

Gwen Vaccaro, Vice President of the Greenbelt Community Development Corporation and Board Member of FOGT, said both organizations had worked diligently to obtain funding/donations to pay for the projection equipment. She commented that many donors are hesitant in making a donation until the management of the theater is determined and what type of programming options will be available.

Michael Hartman, 2-R Gardenway, President of the New Deal Café, commented on the Café being a beneficiary of the theater's success. He noted he was speaking only as a resident, but expressed his support of the expenditure.

Frank Gervasi, 163 Research Road, expressed concern that there won't be an access door to the projection area for moving equipment in and out of the area.

Mr. Roberts noted his support of the theater project but said he would be voting against this item. He said further research is needed on the projection equipment and an access door for projection equipment should be included in the project.

Dr. McGrath said an access door had been discussed but the use of a crane would be required to move the large projection equipment through the door.

After further discussion, Ms. Davis called the question. Ms. Mach seconded. The motion passed 6-1. (Roberts)

The original motion passed 5-2. (Roberts, Pope)

Ms. Pope noted her support of the theater renovation but said more research is needed on this item.

Updating of Forest Preserve Management and Maintenance Guidelines: Mayor Jordan read the agenda comments.

Mayor Jordan commented on flyers distributed to residents with misinformation regarding this agenda item and expressed concern with insinuations made by some individuals that staff and Council are trying to weaken the Forest Preserve Management and Maintenance Guidelines.

Mr. McLaughlin explained that a review of the Forest Preserve Maintenance and Management Guidelines (MMG) had been requested by Council because of disagreements within the Forest Preserve Advisory Board regarding the removal of invasive species. He referred to the staff memorandum dated November 14, 2014, which reviewed the history of the issue noting that there are some sections of the MMG that specify certain tasks (annual inspection of all forest preserve areas) that have never been undertaken, parts of the MMG that are internally inconsistent with other sections of the MMG, and issues that had not been contemplated in the original MMG which should be considered.

Mr. Roberts said the existing MMG are excellent and noted his opposition to any proposed changes to the document.

Mayor Jordan said that Council held a work session on November 17, 2014, to discuss the MMG. The need for an update of the MMG was mentioned as part of the recognition that the MMG is a “living” or “evolving” document.

Mr. Putens noted there are some Forest Preserve needs that need to be addressed including an assessment of the Forest Preserve and the problem with invasive species becoming worse. He also commented on the contention within the Forest Preserve Advisory Board (FPAB).

Ms. Davis explained the following actions had been discussed at the work session held last week: 1) Update of the City Code; 2) Invasive Species - Short-Term Management; 3) Invasive Species - Long Term Management; 4) Update of Management and Maintenance Guidelines; and 5) Forest Preserve Assessment.

Mr. Roberts moved that Council proceed on contracting with a professional forest biologist/ecologist to provide an assessment of the Forest Preserve. Ms. Pope seconded.

Mayor Jordan requested staff seek out a professional forest biologist/ecologist with the necessary skill set and types of qualifications necessary.

Jude Maul, 133 Greenhill Road, said he was an Ecologist with the United States Department of Agriculture and cautioned that many groups license ecologists. He encouraged Council to issue a Request for Proposals and to work with the FPAB to explicitly define exactly what the City is looking for as a result of the assessment. Mr. Maul suggested the RFP be widely distributed.

Mayor Jordan asked how long the assessment would take. Mr. McLaughlin estimated 6 months to one year.

Mr. Snyder said the best time to do the assessment would be in the spring.

Mr. Stevens, 46-A Ridge Road, spoke about his experience serving on the Greenbelt Homes Incorporated (GHI) Woodlands Committee and evaluations that had been done on GHI woodlands. He suggested the assessment look at the health of the entire woodland area in the City and recommend a management plan for the future.

Ethel Dutky, Advisory Committee on Trees member, spoke about her 30 years of experience with land trust in Calvert County and other areas and said she supported this action. She encouraged that the assessment be conducted based on usage/purpose of the Forest Preserve. Ms. Dutky also mentioned the problems invasive species can create in forested areas and noted that once removal has started, it needs to continue on a regular basis. She also suggested that members of the FPAB become certified forest naturalists.

Willis Witter, 16 Empire Place, commented on the past practice of passive management of invasive species.

The motion passed 7-0. Council requested it also be reviewed by the Forest Preserve Advisory Board.

Ms. Davis moved that Council direct the FPAB to initiate a review of the MMG and prepare a list of recommended changes to the City Council. Ms. Mach seconded. The motion passed 6-1. (Roberts)

Laurie Crunk, 71 Ridge, expressed concern about comments made by Mr. Roberts regarding a City staff member and said she would like to hear more information about this.

Ms. Davis explained that Council had asked for a work session on the MMG after learning about various disagreements within the Forest Preserve Advisory Board. Following the work session, she said staff brought forth several suggested actions – as staff is directed to do for other issues as well – for Council to consider. Ms. Davis said she is tremendously bothered by the inuendos made by some individuals accusing staff of working behind the scenes to influence Council. She said Council is very concerned about the Forest Preserve and its future, will consider all the information available and will make their own decision as a body.

Donna Almquist, Hedgewood Drive, said the confusion revolves around the language used in a staff memorandum.

Ms. Davis moved that Council establish a task force with broad representation from City Boards and Committees, as well as State and local jurisdictions and organizations to draft a comprehensive plan for management of invasive vegetation within all wooded areas in the City except for the Forest Preserve which will have a plan that is developed concurrently by the FPAB. Ms. Pope seconded.

Ms. Mach said a comprehensive plan for the Forest Preserve can't be developed until the assessment is complete. She suggested starting with the Forest Preserve assessment and if that works out okay, consider an assessment on other wooded areas.

Mr. Putens and Mr. Herling said the assessment should look at the health of all wooded areas of the City but focus specifically on the Forest Preserve. Mr. Roberts agreed that an assessment should be done on all wooded areas but that would require significantly more funding.

Ms. Mach called the question. Ms. Davis seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

The motion passed 7-0.

Council discussed the short term management of Invasive Species in the Forest Preserve and whether to allow continued intervention and management of invasive species in all wooded areas of the City under the direction of City staff.

It was noted that any action planned within the Forest Preserve would be reviewed and approved by the City Manager prior to implementation and consistent with the Forest Preserve Advisory Board (FPAB) Report #2013-1, the FPAB shall be notified of any projects or programs within the Forest Preserve.

Mr. Herling said Council should approve any actions regarding the removal of invasive species in all wooded areas of the City. Mayor Jordan, Ms. Davis, Ms. Mach and Ms. Pope said the City Manager should be able to approve the work based on input from professional and competent employees on staff and then make Council aware of the work. Ms. Mach said asking the FPAB for their input prior to any removal of invasive species in the Forest Preserve is a good idea.

Mr. Roberts and Mr. Herling suggested this item be delayed until the assessment is complete. After further discussion, Council did not take any action on this issue.

Ms. Davis moved that Council direct staff to review Article IX "Forest Preserve" of Chapter 12, Parks and Recreation, of the City Code and update as needed. She further moved that any proposed changes would be referred to the FPAB for review and then to Council. Ms. Pope seconded. The motion passed 6-1. (Roberts)

Jude Maul, 133 Greenhill Road, said no short term management of invasive species in the forest preserve seems short sighted, especially with invasive species spreading in the preserve every day.

Mr. Witter expressed concern that by the time the assessment is complete and a plan drafted, a large portion of the Forest Preserve will be blanketed with English Ivy and other invasive species. He said the City Manager should have the authority to authorize some removal of invasives in the Forest Preserve.

Mr. Snyder said there were plenty of wooded areas not in the Forest Preserve that were in need of invasive species removal.

Susan Barnett, 12-H Plateau, said she concurred with Mr. Witter's concerns and suggested that the City provide education to the community regarding removal of invasives so volunteers are ready to begin work in the Forest Preserve as soon as it is authorized.

Lee Shields, 8-C Plateau Place, complimented the City Manager who has handled the Forest Preserve issues very well for many years.

Ray Stevens, 46 Ridge, questioned whether any of the Council actions this evening impacts removal of invasive species in the community gardens. Council said no.

Bill Orleans asked and was provided answers to several questions.

Proposed 2015 Legislative Program: Mayor Jordan read the agenda comments.

Ms. Davis moved that Council approve the following priorities for the 2015 Legislative Program:

State:

- 1) \$285,000 bond bill for Greenbelt Lake Dam repair (filter blanket/drain)
- 2) Funding for Greenbelt Road Streetscape Improvements
- 3) Revise noise barrier policies along the Beltway

County:

- 1) Greenbelt Station school attendance issue
- 2) New Greenbelt Fire Station
- 3) Cell Phone Towers on School Properties

Joint State/County:

- 1) Protect municipal funding sources
- 2) Planning and zoning for municipalities
- 3) WMATA funding for Sunday bus service

Ms. Mach seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

Joint Four Cities Resolution: Mayor Jordan read the agenda comments.

Ms. Pope moved that Council support the Joint Four Cities Resolution in support of the location of a new headquarters of the Federal Bureau of Investigation at the Greenbelt Metro Station in Prince George's County. Ms. Davis seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

Council Reports: Councilmembers commented on the following activities and events they recently attended.

National League of Cities Conference – Ms. Davis, Mr. Putens, Ms. Mach, Mr. Herling and Ms. Pope

Walk for Health – Mayor Jordan, Ms. Davis, Mr. Herling and Ms. Pope

Veterans Day Ceremony – All members of Council

Anacostia Trails Steering Committee Meeting – Ms. Davis

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) Board of Directors Meeting – Ms. Davis

COG National Capital Region Emergency Preparedness Council – Ms. Davis

Farewell Reception for outgoing County Councilmembers Turner, Capos and Olson –

Mayor Jordan, Ms. Davis, Mr. Putens, Ms. Mach, Mr. Herling and Ms. Pope

Prince George's County Municipal Association Meeting – Mayor Jordan, Ms. Davis and Mr. Herling

Reception for outgoing Gaithersburg Mayor Sidney Katz – Ms. Davis

Student Council Swearing In Ceremony at Magnolia Elementary School - Mayor Jordan

Workshop on Sustainable Maryland Leadership – Mayor Jordan

Congressman Hoyer's Visit/Donation to St. Hugh's Food Pantry – Mayor Jordan

Greenbelt Community Development Corporation Annual Meeting – Mayor Jordan

REFERAL TO GREENBELT ETHICS COMMISSION: Mr. Roberts moved that a letter from Robert Snyder regarding a personnel matter be referred to the Greenbelt Ethics Commission for review. No second was received on the motion.

Mr. Shay advised the first step to a referral to the Ethics Commission would be to refer the matter to the City Solicitor to see if the City's Ethics Code applies to the matter. He said if it is found to comply, it could then be referred to the Ethics Commission.

Following discussion, Ms. Davis moved that an executive session be scheduled on this personnel matter. Ms. Pope seconded. The motion passed 6-1. (Roberts)

MEETINGS: Council reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule.

ADJOURNMENT: Ms. Mach moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Putens seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

Mayor Jordan adjourned the regular meeting of Monday, November 24, 2014, at 1:03 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Murray
City Clerk

"I hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct report of the regular meeting of the City Council of Greenbelt, Maryland, held November 24, 2014."

Emmett V. Jordan
Mayor

November 24, 2014

Petition to Deny City's Request to Rewrite the Forest Preserve Management and Maintenance Guidelines

Dear Members of Council,

Tonight I petition you to deny the City's request to rewrite the Forest Preserve Management and Maintenance Guidelines (hereafter referred to as the Guidelines). In my opinion, this request is an attempt by the City to trespass on the duties of the Council and the Council's Forest Preserve Advisory Board (FPAB). I attended the work session held on Monday, 17 November, which was organized to discuss proposed changes to the Guidelines. I was surprised to see Mr. Michael McLaughlin, the City Manager, and Ms. Celia Craze, the staff liaison to FPAB, present an FPAB motion to Council without telling Council that the motion had failed to obtain a majority vote by members of the FPAB. In my opinion this was an attempt by the City to mislead the Council. It appears that they made this request so that they could rewrite the Guidelines in order to give them the authority to do whatever they want inside the Forest Preserve without having to first gain approval by Council.

As a volunteer at the Animal Shelter I have experienced similar disturbing behavior by the City. I have already petitioned Council to have an independent agency investigate allegations of possible misconduct by the City in the operations of the animal shelter. I have also asked that you look into the role played by Mr. McLaughlin in preventing Council and the public from knowing about these allegations. I want to make it clear that I am not accusing anyone of misconduct. It is Council's responsibility to determine if the allegations have merit. However, as a volunteer I did experience disturbing behavior. As a result of pointing out irregularities at the shelter, I became the target of two letters written by two volunteers. The purpose of these letters was to discredit me by painting a false picture of my character. I have provided Council with documentation that appears to suggest that these letters were orchestrated by City staff. I am now witnessing the use of these same tactics on Mr. Bob Snyder, Chairman of FPAB. The City is trying to paint a picture of Mr. Snyder as being unable to reach a consensus of opinion amongst FPAB members. This is a troubling pattern, which in my opinion is unethical. I have written several letters to Council about this behavior and you should now be able to recognize this pattern. Therefore in my

opinion, Council should receive the request by Mr. McLaughlin and Ms. Craze to rewrite the Guidelines with suspicion.

I recognize that FPAB must work effectively with both the Council and the City. Therefore, I would like to see the Council explore all options to create a more productive relationship between FPAB and the City. In response to the attempt by the City to mislead Council at Monday's work session, I feel that one option that should be strongly considered is for Council to work with the City Manager to appoint a new City liaison to FPAB.

The Guidelines should not be rewritten to allow the City to circumvent the authority of Council, the careful review by FPAB and input from the public. I view the Guidelines as a sort of constitution put in place by the people of Greenbelt on behalf of the Forest Preserve. The citizens of Greenbelt fought hard for this constitution. This recent attempt by Mr. McLaughlin and Ms. Craze to water down the checks and balances of power between the Council and the City will be met with an equally hard fight. Only the elected members of Council represent the will of the people. Speaking for myself, I want the Forest Preserve and the will of the people protected from this attempted trespass by the City.

Brian Almquist

Boxwood Village

Cindy Murray

From: Patrick J. McAndrew <pmcandrew@manddlaw.com>
Sent: Monday, November 24, 2014 4:26 PM
To: Cindy Murray
Subject: Tonight's City Council Meeting

Importance: High

Cindy,

As I mentioned when I telephoned, I am requesting that this email be provided to the Mayor prior to tonight's council meeting.

Thanks,

Pat

Mayor Jordan,

It had been my hope to appear before council this evening, to speak under Petitions and Requests. Due to scheduling issues, I am unable to attend this evening's meeting in person. I am requesting, as a courtesy, that you present this email on my behalf under Petitions and Requests.

As you recall, I appeared before council on October 27th at which time I offered a Petition on behalf of the rank and file police officers of the Greenbelt Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police. This petition sought to have the city fund step increases in the current budget for all rank and file police officers.

My purpose in presenting a petition this evening is to amend my earlier petition. This evening I would like to petition council to fund such step increases for all classified city employees, not just the rank and file police officers. Since this current budget would mark the fourth consecutive year that all employees would not receive step increases, I believe it is time to make this matter a high priority. As citizens, we benefit greatly from a capable, devoted and professional city staff - in all departments.

It is intended that all funded step increases would be retroactive to July 1, 2014, which marks the beginning of the current budget year.

I also request a status report on my petition from the October 27th meeting.

Your presentment of these two issues on my behalf and in my absence is greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

Pat McAndrew
7500 Greenway Center Drive, Suite 1130 and 115 Periwinkle Court